



# Children Are Monitoring the Playgrounds in Bayraklı District

Izmir Child  
Studies Network





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# ABOUT IZMIR CHILD STUDIES NETWORK

To facilitate and support rights-based monitoring and advocacy activities related to child studies of national or local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, public institutions, social enterprises, and individuals operating for the benefit of children.

## NETWORK'S GOAL

- To ensure visibility of local studies for children,
- To strengthen the advocacy and monitoring role of civil society on child studies and to develop methods and policies within this framework,
- To strengthen the capacities of stakeholders / actors in the field of child studies,
- To collect and evaluate data on issues related to child studies and to perform academic studies,
- To carry out advocacy activities in order to create strategies for mainstreaming child studies in the policies of local private sector and public institutions,
- To realize the local applicability of national and international conventions on the rights of the children,
- To establish effective partnerships between actors, especially non-governmental organizations working with children and/or for children, and to raise awareness on this issue,
- To ensure the sustainability of this network.
- Training and capacity building,
- Data collection and research,
- Indicator-based monitoring.

**Izmir Child Studies Network**, which was established to carry out child studies locally, continues to work with a rights-based approach in local studies on children and to strengthen the monitoring and advocacy role of civil society in activities for children's rights. The Network is based on and directs the work of national and international laws, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which legally guarantees the rights of children. The main purpose of the network is to analyze the current situation of children's rights and work locally within the framework of the Principles on the Support and Protection of Children's Rights and Sustainable Development Goals, and to produce locally-focused solutions in order to ensure that no child is left behind and that all children have equal access to resources.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Izmir Child Studies Network, we have completed the '**Children Are Monitoring the Playgrounds in Bayraklı District**' exercise that we have prepared with the support of the ETKINIZ Program. The main purpose of this study is to contribute to the **creation of a data-driven advocacy** area by evaluating the playgrounds in the neighborhoods of children in different neighborhoods in Bayraklı district of İzmir in the context of **Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

In this context, we must state that we have prepared the relevant assessment using some basic indicators. These indicators were prepared as an output of the '**Indicator Set and Guide for Local Monitoring of the Right to Play**' study prepared with the **facilitation of Izmir Child Studies Network and with the support of the European Union - ETKINIZ Program**. In addition, we plan to contribute to the reduction of the 'right to life' violations that children face in playgrounds by restructuring playgrounds with safety-oriented solution proposals. In summary, each study follows up one another with an aim to contribute to the public sphere.

We planned to make this contribution as a Human Rights Monitoring supported by research findings. We planned a survey to conduct the research. While preparing the reference point and questions of the survey, the document titled **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Optional Protocols, Rules of Procedure and General Comments of the Committee on the Rights of the Child** were used as a source.

Accordingly, the focus has been both on Article 31 of the convention, and on **General Comment No. 17, prepared in 2013 by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child**, regarding the field of 'playgrounds', which we focus on in our work as Izmir Child Studies Network. In this comment, 'the exercise of the right to play is **hindered by the lack of child-centred, safe, supportive, stimulating and stress-free environments in which children** can come together, play and discover new things. Children's right to have areas to play **is particularly at risk in many urban settings.**'

In our survey prepared based on this approach, questions were asked based on **whether the playgrounds were safe - whether the areas were old and neglected, whether the materials in the parks met the developmental needs of the child, and whether the parks were in a clean and healthy environment**. Our target group was **children between the ages of 10-15 living in Bayraklı district**, and they were given structured questionnaires.



The answers collected via these questions were made meaningful and turned into the monitoring report you already have, and certain suggestions were presented to the decision makers of **the Parks and Gardens Directorate, Research and Development Directorate, Culture and Social Affairs Directorate of Bayraklı Municipality.**

At the same time, this monitoring report will be shared with the institutions working in the field of children's rights in Izmir. The expected effect is to support this point of view with inclusive studies by updating the service offerings of other district municipalities, especially Bayraklı Municipality, with a child-friendly approach. **100 children living in 15 neighborhoods in Bayraklı district participated in the study and the main findings obtained** are as follows;

- There is a need to improve child participation in the design and construction of playgrounds. In addition, although there **are mechanisms for children to convey their opinions, suggestions and complaints**, they are not **sufficiently promoted and accessible.**
- There is a need for **inclusive and standardized regulations in a way that prioritizes safety in matters such as construction, infrastructure-construction works, safe separations, etc.** around the playgrounds. These regulations should be supported by legislation and regularly audited and reported.
- Playgrounds were not designed for the use of children with disabilities. **The studies carried out for the disabled people and the studies carried out on children without disabilities are differentiated from each other.** This issue should be readdressed, and children should be encouraged to exercise their right to play together.
- Playgrounds for children and recreational areas for adults **should be physically separated** by the local government. However, the playgrounds for children in **different age groups** should be planned in different places or in a segregated manner in order to ensure **a safe playground.** While these plans are being made, child participation should be prioritized.



# INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the monitoring note prepared within the scope of the 'Children Are Monitoring the Playgrounds in Bayraklı District' project, which we have prepared with the support of the ETKİNİZ Program as Izmir Child Studies Network, to support local decision-makers in **developing a strategy that prioritizes children's right to a safety-oriented life, from the perspective of play. In addition, the discovery of violations of the right to play should be considered as one of the aims of the study.** As Izmir Child Studies Network, we aim to keep this issue on the agenda as an institution that wants to specialize in this field and to conduct data-oriented advocacy at the national level with the work we have done in the field of children's right to play with the support of the ETKİNİZ Program. **In carrying out all these activities, the reference points in General Comment No. 17 prepared by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2013 will be taken into consideration.**

First, a literature review is presented in this review, conducted to understand the current situation on the concept of right to play and safety. Then, the survey results taken by the children were divided into sections and certain results were presented via visualized data. Finally, in the conclusions and recommendations section, suggestions for local decision makers are presented. We hope that our work will contribute to the path of activists who want to advocate first in Bayraklı Municipality and then in all local decision-making mechanisms!

## CURRENT STATUS

### • CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND THEIR RIGHT TO PLAY

Children's rights have become an issue that is discussed more intensely by the international community in the 20th century. However, the first **rise of the issue dates back to Jean Jacques Rousseau's Emile in the 18th century.** In this work, the development of the child at different age stages since birth and what needs to be done in these processes is focused. **Especially after the two world wars, children's rights have increased their importance in the agenda of the international community.** Children were seen as the group most adversely affected by wars and mass migrations.

Due to the fact that children are completely dependent beings at the beginning of life, **they are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and the activities of states affect children the most, the need has arisen to create a separate international document for children's rights (UNICEF, 2007).** International documents established for the purpose of recognizing and strengthening children's rights are The 1924 Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted in 1959, respectively. **This fundamental text on the subject was also signed by Turkey, and therefore has the force of special law according to Article 90 of the Constitution.**

**It is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.** Children's rights, which continue to expand with the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, have become the most comprehensive and up-to-date with the UNCRC.

**Children's rights are handled in a holistic manner in the Convention, which includes all classes of rights such as economic, social, cultural, political and civil.** The Convention, which consists of 54 articles in total, has a special place in the field of children's rights in that it regulates the issues that the previous declarations only mentioned or even did not mention at all (Lopatka, 1990). UNCRC is seen as a document in which positive law is applied beyond natural law due to the fact that in addition to the rights arising from the human nature of the child, rights that are not in natural law are also included (Algan, 2020).

The Convention, which outlines the law on the rights of the child and determines its basic values, **has been prepared on 4 basic principles.** These principles are;

01

Prohibition of discrimination  
(Article 2 of the UNCRC),

02

Consideration of the  
**best interests of the child**  
(Article 3 of the UNCRC),

03

Ensuring the child's **right to life and development**  
(Article 6 of the UNCRC),

04

Ensuring the child's participation  
in **decision-making mechanisms**  
on relevant issues  
(UNCRC Article 12) (UNICEF, 2007).

All articles prepared under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and every decision of the signatory States concerning children have been prepared and approved in accordance with the above basic principles. **Turkey signed the Convention, which was adopted in 1989, in 1990, published in the Official Gazette on 27 January 1995, and entered into force on 4 April 1995 following its submission to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.** However, since the date of the signing of the Convention in Turkey, deficiencies have continued to be seen in terms of the full implementation of the Convention.

Although children's rights are accepted as part of human rights, children's rights are mentioned separately for some of the reasons given above. In addition, there are rights arising from the care and development needs of children and prioritizing the special situation of the child. **One of these rights is the right to play.** This right;

Was secured by Article 31 of the UNCRC. According to the article;

- States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest, leisure, play and engage in age-appropriate recreational activities and to participate freely in cultural and artistic life.
- States Parties shall respectfully recognize and encourage the right of the child to fully participate in cultural and artistic life and shall promote the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for the child in the enjoyment of leisure, rest, arts and cultural (activities).



While the value given to children's rights in general is open to debate, the adequacy of the importance given to the child's right to play in society is controversial. According to Küçükali, the right to play is a more critical issue than many other rights in terms of the role it plays in the physical and mental development of the child. **Because play is also a field of right that takes place within a social, economic, cultural and political intersection.** Research shows that thanks to play, children's motor development, language development, social skills, creativity, problem-solving and learning abilities increase greatly. **However, even without these achievements, the right to play is one of the fundamental rights of the child, and the parties to the convention have certain obligations.**

Plays can be enjoyed in indoor areas such as home and school, as well as outdoors. In addition, Tasçi found that playing outdoors had a more positive effect on children's development and creativity than playing indoors (2010).

There are many criteria for the realization of the child's right to play, such as the society's perception of play, the **perspective on the child, the economic situation and the political atmosphere in the society.** In this report, the spatial features necessary for the realization of the right to play will be mentioned and the importance of safety among these features will be examined. While it is important to design cities and all outdoor spaces from a child-friendly perspective, proper arrangement of play areas, which are the places where children play most often outside, should be a top priority.

## • PLAYGROUNDS AND PERSPECTIVE ON SAFETY OF PLAYGROUNDS

Going out of the house and playing freely in the open area increases not only children's physical and cognitive skills, but also their self-confidence (Taşçı, 2010). However, some problems that can be seen in playgrounds can adversely affect children's enjoyment of the right to play. Playgrounds **being not accessible, not designed to be inclusive enough, lack of equipment,** and safety issues can be cited as obstacles to children exercising their right to play.

Insufficient number of children's playgrounds **prevents many children from being able to reach the playgrounds comfortably and safely.** Research shows that the amount of playground per capita in Berlin is 10.7 m<sup>2</sup> and in Munich is 11.6 m<sup>2</sup> (Uysal, 2013). Although the playground per capita in Izmir is unknown, according to the latest research, the green area per person is calculated as only 5.13 m<sup>2</sup>. **With the total amount of green area at such a low level, it is obvious that even lower results will be obtained when only the playing fields are calculated.** This is due to the fact that the playgrounds are made in small numbers and are not large enough.

Playgrounds that are not sufficiently inclusive are an element that restricts the right of at least part of children to play. **The inability of children of different ages, with different tendencies and abilities, or with different disabilities to play together results from playgrounds not designed to be inclusive enough.** For example, the fact that the toys in a playground are designed to appeal only to a limited age group may make it impossible for children from different age groups to play in that area.

The fact that playgrounds are not safe enough is perhaps the most important factor that deprives children of the right to play. **Safety problems in playgrounds not only take away the child's right to play, but also threaten their health and life.** In Turkey, concrete steps are not taken to plan and/or develop playgrounds at both national and local levels. Strict standards are not set in this area, and those that are determined are not mandatory. For this reason, in many different parts of the country, children play in playgrounds that are not physically safe enough. Among the common features of unsafe playgrounds, the wrong choice of materials, neglected toys, traffic and other people who use the playgrounds for different purposes stand out. **These situations not only restrict the child's right to play but can also cause injuries and even loss of life.**

**Regarding the determination of the standards of playgrounds, Turkey has started to enforce TS EN 1176 by combining two internationally accepted standards (EN 1176 and EN 1177).** The Turkish Standards Institute has translated and combined these booklets and arranged the playgrounds as stipulated by these documents. Although these standards have been accepted as they are, the fulfillment of these standards in Turkey is left to choice on a voluntary basis (Compulsory Standard Communiqué, 2017). This means that it is not mandatory to construct the playground elements in accordance with this standard. Depending on this situation, playgrounds can be made not by using safe materials that do not threaten health, but from materials that are easy to produce and process that reduce cost. **This constitutes a risk factor in the playgrounds. For example, research shows that playground elements made of iron rust over time and their can have sharp edges.**

In addition to the wrong choice of materials on playgrounds, another issue that threatens safety is that these areas are generally left unrepaired. **Especially in playgrounds that are not designed and manufactured in accordance with TS EN 1176, the need for maintenance may arise very often.** If the materials are used incorrectly, the equipment on the playground will be more vulnerable than it should be, which will cause it to break/deteriorate, putting children's health at risk. Not only should the playing equipment be repaired when it breaks down, but in general, the interior and surroundings of the playgrounds should be maintained at regular intervals. **In a survey conducted in Istanbul, 66 out of 186 children stated that their main complaints about the playground in their neighborhood were broken toys and glass shards on the floor (Uysal, 2013).**



Playgrounds located close to intense vehicle traffic seriously threaten the health of children. Although there is vehicle traffic around, playgrounds that are lacking precautions to prevent children from going into the road or that are established too close to the transformers are frequently encountered. **Children who use playgrounds that are not surrounded by fences and tree-like elements can often be victims of traffic accidents and stray animal attacks. According to a news published by the Milliyet news site in 2018, children have been the group that has been killed and injured the most in traffic accidents in the last 10 years.** Undoubtedly, a significant number of children killed or injured in traffic accidents were involved in these accidents during play.

Another prominent topic about the safety of playgrounds is people who use these areas except for the purpose of playing. In many parts of Turkey, some playgrounds become dangerous, especially in the evening hours. The primary reason for this situation is that the playgrounds are used as a meeting point for drug dealers, criminals and gangs during these hours. People who come to playgrounds with purposes other than to play often violate children's right to play. Fights and shootouts on playgrounds in various cities of Turkey are frequently encountered in the news. **As a result of the lack of adequate security by law enforcement agencies in the playgrounds and their surroundings at all hours of the day, not only the right to play but also the right to life of children is endangered.**

### **Safety on Playgrounds and General Comment No. 17 of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013)**

As Izmir Child Studies Network, we carried out the field study after the literature studies of the **'Children Are Monitoring the Playgrounds in Bayraklı District' project**, which we carried out with the support of the ETKİNİZ – European Union Program. **Before implementing the fieldwork, both determination of the framework of the research and creation of questions in accordance with this framework processes were carried out.** In the meantime, Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'The rights of the child to rest, leisure, play, cultural life and the arts', was based on the **General Comment No. 17 of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child**

The background to the preparation of the General Comment is the changes taking place on a global scale – **rapid urbanisation, income inequality, gender inequality, increasing child labour, problems in access to education.** In such an environment, taking the perspective of the general comment on the playgrounds, **a categorization – ranking was performed.** Accordingly, in the field of 'children's right to play', the obligations expressed in General Comment No. 17 and **listed for decision-making mechanisms are as follows;**

- States parties **are obliged without discrimination** in respect of the race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability or birth of the child, parent, guardian or legal guardian,

- The rights of girls, children with disabilities, children living in poor or dangerous environments, **children living in poverty, children living in prisons, health institutions or boarding institutions** should be protected.

- **In addition, special attention should be paid to addressing the rights of specific** groups of children, including asylum seeker and refugee children facing a humanitarian crisis, children on the streets, nomadic groups, migrant or internally displaced children, children from indigenous and minority groups, working children, children without parents,

- **It underlines the importance of providing** children with opportunities to contribute to the development of legislation, policies, strategies and the design of services to ensure the implementation of the rights under Article 31. This contribution may include, for example, the participation of children in policy consultations.

- In the neighborhoods where children live, it is necessary to **provide an environment that is sufficiently free from waste, pollution, traffic and other physical hazards.** Measures need to be taken for children who cannot exercise their right to play due to **open sewer systems, overcrowded cities, uncontrolled traffic, inadequate street lighting and congested streets,** and insufficient public transport on a global scale.

- Inadequate inspections and potential risks in parks, playgrounds, **sports facilities severely restrict children's opportunities for safe play and entertainment.** In this context, there is a **need for a comprehensive intervention by decision-makers** by minimizing the problems faced by the areas offered to children.

In summary, in the project we carried out as Izmir Child Studies Network, we examined the **General Comment No. 17 of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child published in 2013 based on 'security' approach** in accordance with article 31. In the relevant document, **it is emphasized that there should not be any discrimination when using the right to play, the participation of children in the process should be encouraged, attention should be paid to the dangerous points around the playgrounds, and finally, the need for supervision in children's playgrounds.** We, as Izmir Child Studies Network, created the questions based on the topics we mentioned while structuring the survey.

# METHOD

In this monitoring study, mixed research method was used. On the one hand, a literature review was conducted in the field of children's rights, children's right to play and safety. In addition, a survey was conducted with a total of 100 children between the ages of 15-18 living in Bayraklı district. While this survey was applied in the field, one-to-one, face-to-face interview method was used.

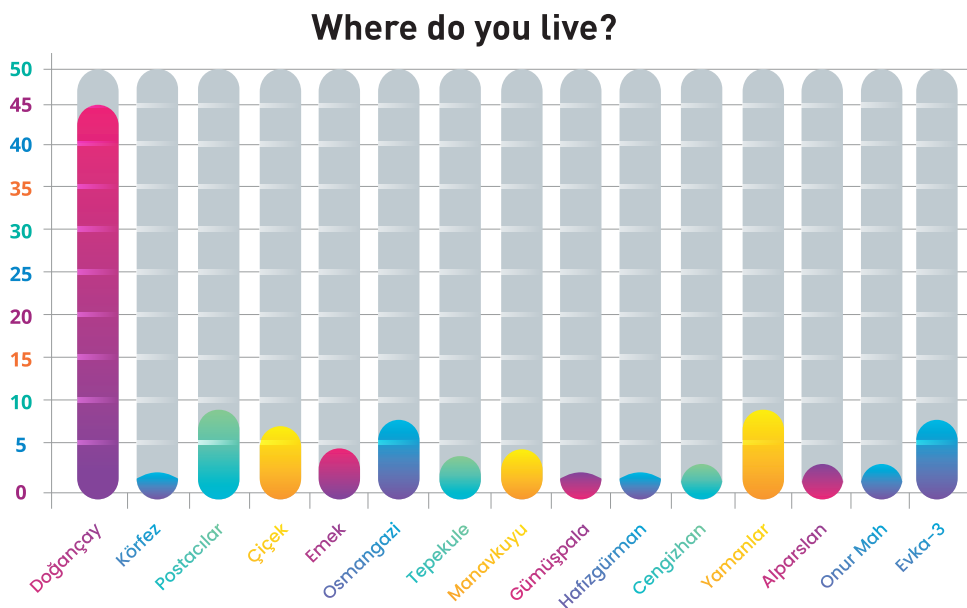
In order to reach children with different demographic characteristics, the support of the Bayraklı City Council Children's Assembly and the member institutions and organizations of İzmir Child Studies Network should be appreciated. However, it should be stated that there have been problems in accessing different demographic groups at the desired level due to both the continuing impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the fact that children are in an active academic term. In order to minimize this problem, interviews were also held in children's parks where children living in the same district were located.

# MONITORING FINDINGS

Survey participants were asked a total of 22 questions, 21 of which were multiple choice and 1 of which was open-ended. Survey has been prepared to evaluate the safety of children's playgrounds through the eyes of children and is divided into certain categories in this context. The sub-categories are structured on four bases: **child participation, access to the playground, situation in the playground, suggestions.**

## › Demographics

First, the demographic information was obtained. Aim of collecting this information was to understand the socio-economic condition of children such as their age, academic status, neighborhood / district where they live.



With this question, the focus was on demographic data such as residence, age and education status of the survey participants. All 100 people answered these three questions, of which 51% was girls and 47% was boys. 2% did not state gender. In the settlement / residence part, similar percentages were achieved in other neighborhoods except Doğançay Neighborhood. There are many reasons why nearly half of the children surveyed live in the Doğançay neighborhood. The first of these is that there was less space in the said neighborhood compared to the child population, and the second is that the child population was denser than in other neighborhoods.

Another question we ask in this section was their date of birth and educational status. It was revealed that 65 of them were middle school students, 22 were primary school students and 10 were high school students. 1 child stated that he did not attend school. 4 of our participants were of Syrian origin, and 1 child who stated that they do not attend school was also of Syrian origin.

### › Right to Participate

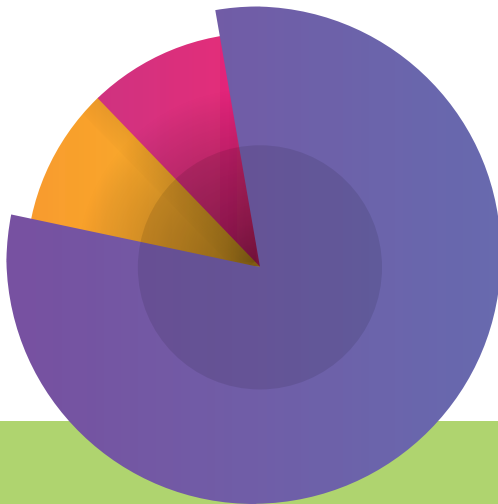
As Izmir Child Studies Network, one of the most important issues that we have emphasized in our studies on this field was the concept of 'children's right to participate'. In this context, it is necessary to position children's rights with a rights-based perspective, to evaluate the service provision of public institutions and organizations through the eyes of children, and to evaluate them with the perspective of children's rights.

In this context, we first asked the children whether they participated in the decision-making processes during the design and construction of the playgrounds in the neighborhood. Secondly, they were asked whether there was an e-mail, telephone or any address sign where they could report their opinions, suggestions and complaints about the playgrounds.



#### Question:

*As far as you know, was the opinion of yours or a child living in your neighborhood asked during the design and construction of the playgrounds in your neighborhood?*



 Evet, danışıldı

 Hayır, danışılmadı

 Kısmen danışıldı



After asking this question, we briefly told the children about the meaning of the concept of 'participation' and how it is applied. After this short workshop, we asked the participating children to respond. Only 7% stated that they participated in the consultation process, an overwhelming majority of 87% stated that they were not included in the consultation process, and 6% stated that they were partially consulted.

Another question we address in this section is relevant. Accordingly, all the participants answered this question, with 30% of the answers stated there is, 57% stated there isn't, and 13% stated there is partially. Likewise, when we asked if they knew which paths to follow when they had problems on the playgrounds, 59% of the participants stated that they did not know, consistent with the previous question.

In Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'The Right of the Child to Participation' means, in its simplest form, that every child who has the ability to form his or her own views freely expresses his or her views on any issue that may affect him. However, the answers we have received show that there is an axis open to development in this regard.

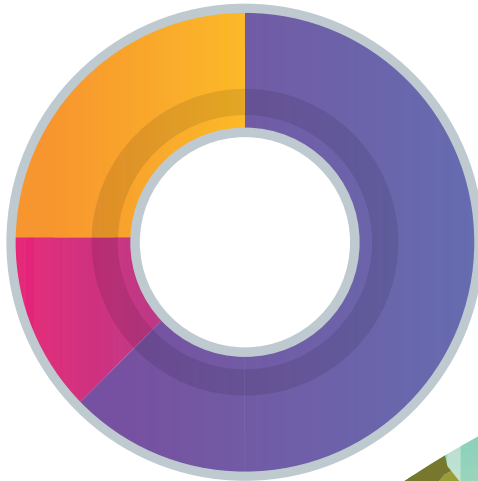
### › Right to Play being Safe and Accessible

In this section, questions have been created with reference to the Municipality-level obligations section mentioned in the General Comment. Based on the safety and accessibility of the relevant area in the questions, approaches have been developed over the state of transportation between the house and the playground, the availability of lighting on the road, and public safety measures to protect individuals and groups that may threaten security in the park.



#### Question:

*Can you reach the playground you are using in a short time and safely by walking from home?*



- Evet ulaşabiliyorum
- Hayır ulaşamıyorum
- Kısmen ulaşabiliyorum

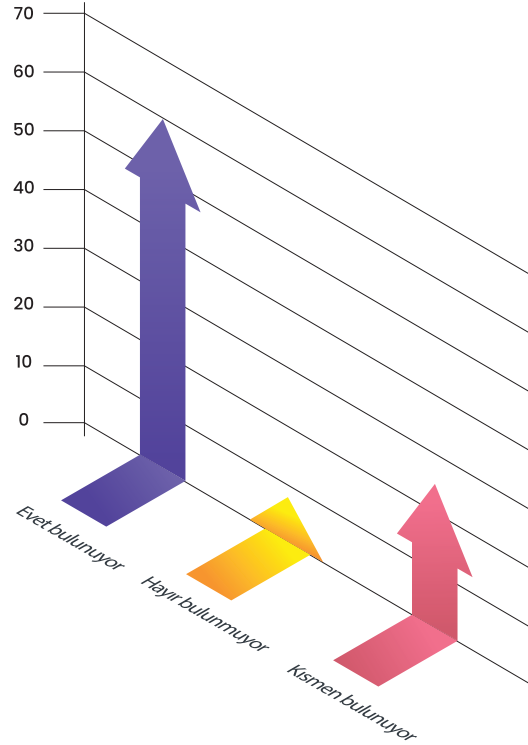


All of our participants answered this question. 69% of them said that they could easily access, 12% partially access, and 19% had certain problems accessing the playground. In this regard, we can state that an important criterion was fulfilled during the construction of playgrounds.

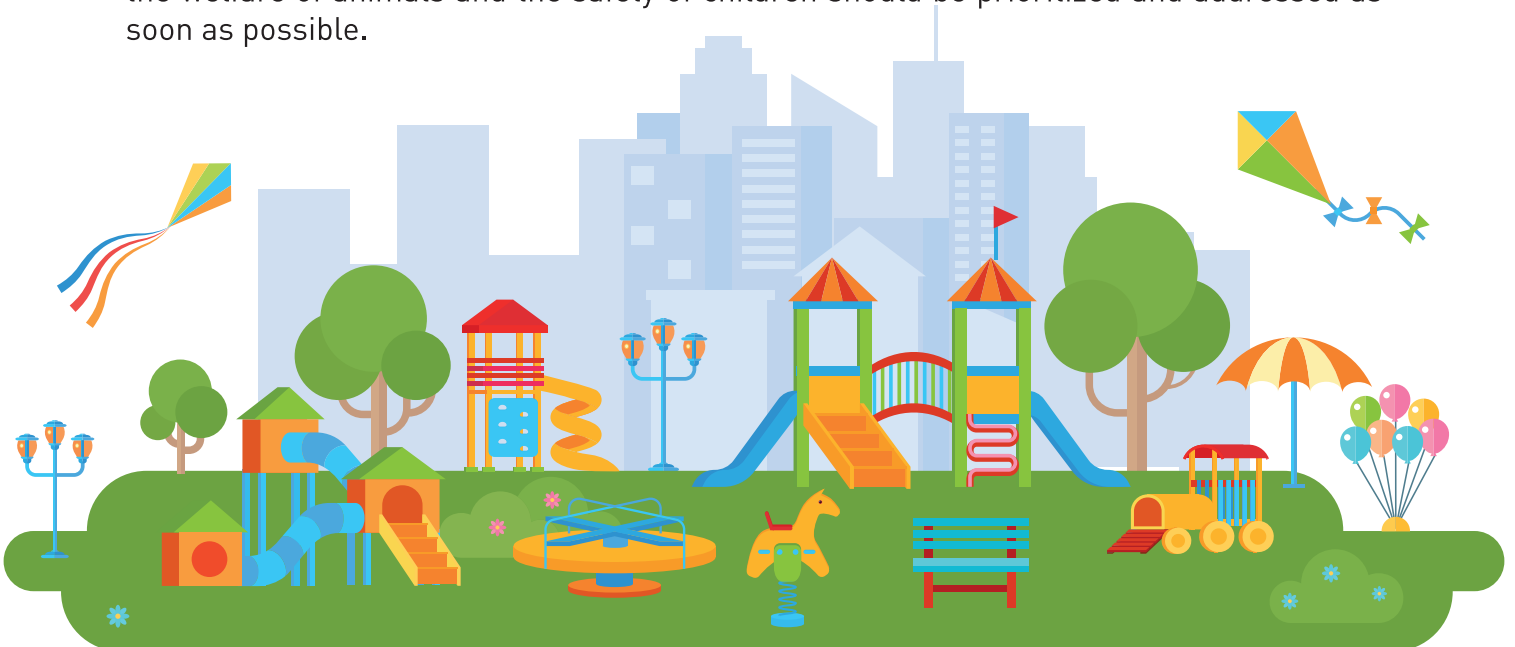
### Question:

*Is there enough lighting on the road you walk between the playground and the house in your neighborhood to ensure your safety?*

All participants answered this question. 61% said yes, 17% said no, and 22% said partially. This question should also be considered in the context of 'gender equality'. Because it was observed during the study that lighting is also important for girls' access to playgrounds.



Another question we ask in this section focuses on 'stray animals', which has been discussed intensively by the public in recent days. As it is known, the services related to the safe sterilization of stray animals and similar care are under the responsibility of the local administration. We asked the participants if there were any stray animals on the road leading to the nearest playground to your home and near the playground. A significant majority of the participants, 73%, stated that there are. In this regard, the problems regarding the presence of stray animals in both parks and in the areas around the parks, the welfare of animals and the safety of children should be prioritized and addressed as soon as possible.



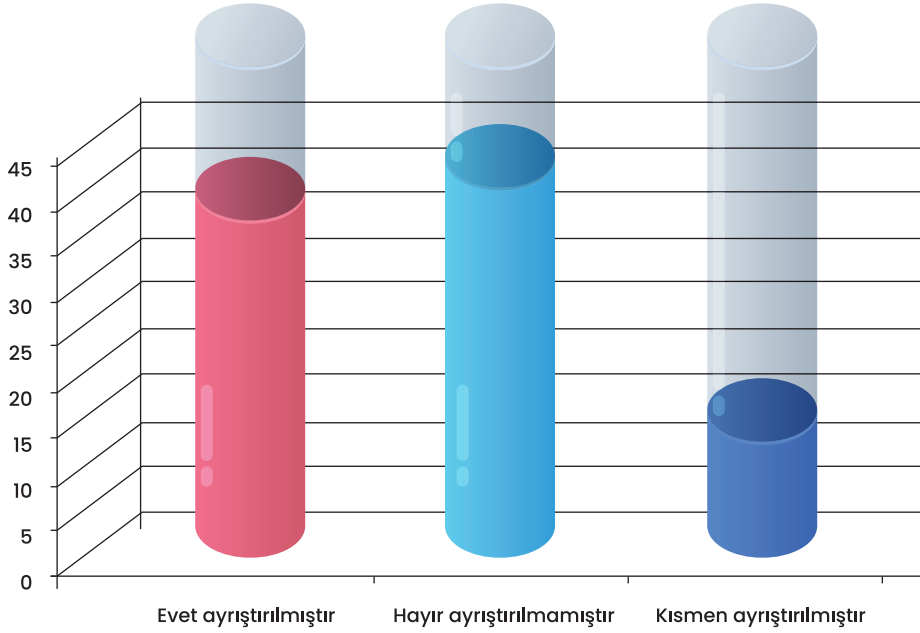




**Question:**

**Are the playgrounds in your neighborhood and the street/road with vehicle traffic separated from each other by pedestrian paths or fences?**

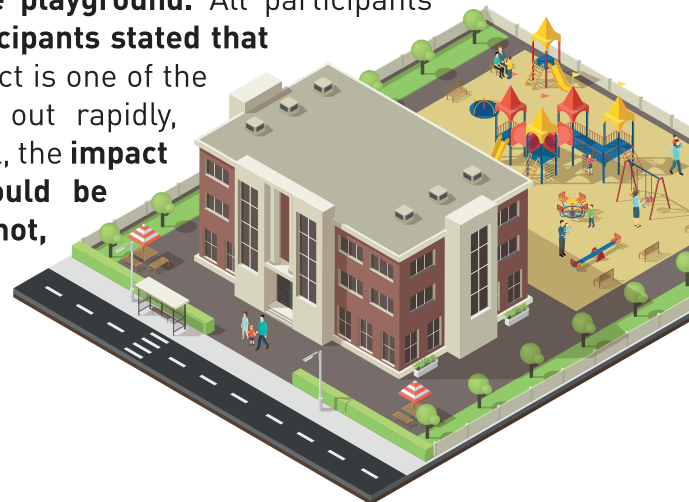
**Barrier Availability Rate**



All participants answered this question. **41% answered that it was separated, 44% said not separated, and 15% said partially separated.**

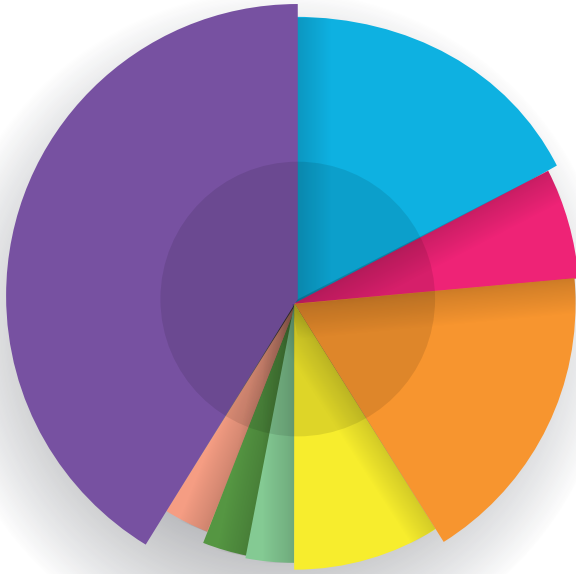
While it seems to be a disadvantageous situation, it also provides an opportunity for a perspective that helps us develop new approaches to the concept of the child's right to play. Namely, according to the 'Data-Based Strategy Development for Children's Play in the City' Report published by TESEV in 2021, in line with the new information obtained about the development of the child, it is suggested that the interaction of the child through play should be maximized. At this point, **instead of similar playgrounds surrounded by fences with today's new information**, an approach designed with landscape features, integrated with nature and embracing the whole society is accepted as a more valid approach for the child's right to play.

Another questions asked in this section was **whether there is a construction site on the road leading to the playground and close to the playground**. All participants answered this question, and **41% of the total participants stated that there were and 49% were not**. Since Bayraklı district is one of the districts where urban transformation is carried out rapidly, although the existence of construction areas is usual, the **impact of construction areas on the environment should be re-evaluated in the context of security, and if not, appropriate regulations should be prepared and continuously inspected and reported**.




**Question:**
***Have you ever been injured on a playground?***

All participants answered this question, 44% said they were injured, 42% were not injured, and 14% were partially injured. When we ask those who said yes how they were injured, toy-related injuries were in majority. Approximately 20% were of such injuries, of which 6% fell from the broken toy, 2% were injured by the toy, 6% were injured due to the ground around toys, and 3% were jammed and similar accidents. Others are injuries such as running and tripping, actually caused by toys in playgrounds and the area per capita.



- Oyuncaktan yere düştüm
- Çevre düzenlemesinden kaynaklı düştüm
- Kırık oyuncak ayağıma battı
- Kırık oyuncaktan düştüm
- Koşarken zemine takılıp düştüm
- Maç yaparken düştüm
- Spor aletinde sıkıştım
- Platformdan kayarak düştüm



## › Budget for the Right to Play, Leisure, Entertainment and Rest

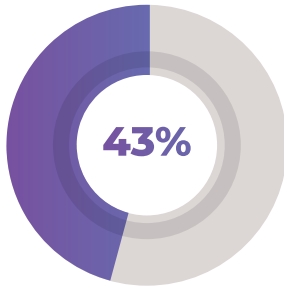
Within the Obligations Mentioned in the General Comment, there is a section titled 'Allocation of Relevant and Sufficient Budget'. In this section, it is noted that when it comes to culture, arts, sports, entertainment and play activities, the allowances allocated for children should be inclusive and consistent **with the proportion of children in the general population and should be made in such a way as to include children of all age groups**. Waiting in line when using toys may indicate that materials are inadequate, and having a narrow space while waiting in line may also indicate a possible safety problem. For this reason, in this section, participants were asked whether they were waiting in line when using the toys in the park.



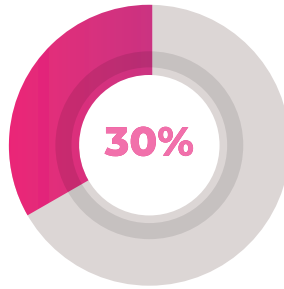
**Question:**

***Do you wait in line to use a toy?***

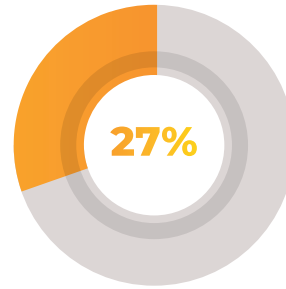
### Ratio of Waiting in Line



Evet bekliyorum



Kismen bekliyorum



Hayır beklemiyorum

All participants answered this question, and 43% said they do, 27% said they don't, and 30% said partially. Again, to the question of waiting time, which was asked in relation to this question, 22% of them answered as 0-5 minutes, 10% said 5-10 minutes, and 7% said 10-15 minutes. These answers can produce more meaningful results together with the other questions asked in this section. Because 'waiting in line' is a social life practice that children should learn, but if the park areas and toy sections are not separated according to age groups, problems may arise in terms of healthy exercise of children's right to play.



## › Non-Discrimination Principle

Within the Obligations Mentioned in the General Comment, there is a 'Universal Design' section. Accordingly, the fact that the areas, buildings, equipment and vehicles and services where games, entertainment and cultural, sports and artistic activities are carried out being in accordance with the universal design prevents discrimination that children with disabilities may be exposed to, and is encouraged with an inclusive approach.

According to this approach, one of the questions we ask children is that whether the participants play with children with physical disabilities in the playgrounds they use. All our participants answered this question. 30% of the answers stated that they played, and 54% stated that they did not play. Our observation in parks is in conformity, indicating that the vast majority of parks do not have a toy arrangement suitable for the access of the disabled. However, many local governments make separate arrangements for people with disabilities. While such work is important, it can limit the cohesion of children with and without disabilities, so we need to design playgrounds in accordance with universal design principles.

Another of the questions we've asked in this section is whether the playgrounds in your neighborhood are segregated according to specific age groups. All our participants answered this question. 22% of the participants stated that they were separated according to age groups, while a significant majority, 69% of them, stated that no separation was made. As it is known, playgrounds improve and reinforce the vital skills of children. For this reason, there is a need to develop toys based on the needs of different age groups and of different developmental level. Secondly, if the play groups are not divided according to age groups, the ground can lead up to '**peer bullying**' among children.





# RESULT

Here we present the approaches we have adopted in the study as a comment to the questions with a right-based perspective. In addition, there are some main conclusions we drew from the study. These are:

- Although COVID-19 measures are more flexible than in 2021 at the time we conducted the study, it shows that the practices that both parents and children have acquired during the pandemic period are still valid. It should be noted that instead of getting together and playing in large groups, children and parents are in touch with a narrower circle.
- Secondly, children have differentiating needs respective demands. The lack of planning of the playgrounds without taking into account these needs reduces the number of families and children benefiting from these areas and increases the demand for different playgrounds. Considering that a significant part of these areas are paid, together with socio-economic inequalities, problems arise for the exercise of the right to play.
- Finally, the visibility of children from different languages, religions and ethnicities in the playgrounds where they can express themselves is decreasing day by day, and the fact that these children play with other children in the city is important in terms of 'sustainability of social peace'.





# SUGGESTIONS

In this section, as Izmir Child Studies Network, we share the recommendations regarding the study on '**Children Are Monitoring the Playgrounds in Bayraklı District**' project we have prepared with the support of ETKİNİZ Program.

Accordingly, our suggestions to Bayraklı district municipality and local administrations are as follows;

- The areas in the playgrounds should be increased considering the number of **toys and the number of users**,
- Playgrounds should be fenced in order to **prevent the entry of stray animals**,
- Playgrounds **should be isolated from other areas**. If this isolation is done with green areas, it can contribute to both the ecosystem in the city and the park safety,
- Equipment and standards governing safety and precautionary guidelines relevant to equipment **should be regularly audited and reported by local authorities**,
- Equipment for disabled children should not be in a separate park, but in **the same park with children without disabilities, and parks should be** made an environment of social harmony and cohesion.
- Playgrounds should be divided according to age groups, which **will prevent children from possible peer bullying**.
- The areas with insufficient lighting between the playground and the surrounding settlements should be identified and **lighting equipment should be provided**.
- One of the most important problems in the field of security is whether the materials are suitable or not. **Research shows** that in the environment where children / individuals make decisions using participatory mechanisms, an environment more suitable for the 'social contract' can be created and the protection of materials can be ensured.

As a result, we will present our data and suggestions to local decision-making mechanisms, and we think that this document we prepared will contribute to the acquisition of a child perspective, especially by a local administration such as Bayraklı district that adopts a 'child-friendly city' vision in the Strategic Plan documents.

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# NOTES



A large white rectangular area with horizontal dotted lines for writing, resembling a notebook page. The left edge of this area is decorated with a vertical line of grey circles, suggesting a spiral binding. The bottom edge of the page has a decorative, jagged, torn-paper effect.



# NOTES



A large white rectangular area with a torn bottom edge, containing horizontal dotted lines for writing. On the left side, there are ten grey circular punch holes.

# NOTES



A large white area with horizontal dotted lines for writing, resembling a notebook page. The page is decorated with a vertical row of grey circles on the left side, suggesting a spiral binding. The bottom edge of the page is decorated with a jagged, torn paper effect.



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